THE STORY OF A SECRET SERVICE AGENT WHOM FATE THROWS INTO A NEW YORK "JUNE WEDDING" COMPLICATION

BEST MAN

A Complete Novel Each Week in The Evening World



By Grace L. H. Lutz

CHAPTER VII.

looked ahead tentatively to see if the track on which he must jump was clear, and the great eye of an engine stabbed him in the it bore down upon him. The instant it swept by, its hot breath fanning his cheek, and he drew back shuddering involuntarily. It was of no use. He could not jump

heavy eyebrows were false; and yet de could not make it out. How could it be possible that a man who was cept an invitation to a dinner where the curtain, peered out. he might not be able to get away for hours?

He would stick to the train for a little yet, inasmuch as there seemed no safe way of getting off at present. Having decided so much he gave one glauce toward the twinkling lights of the city burrying past, and, getting up, sauntered into the train, keeping weather eye out for the conductor.

Gordon had never held anything so precious, so sweet and beautiful and

precious, so sweet and beautiful and frail looking in his arms.

Forgetting his own need of quiet and obscurity, he laid her gently back upon the couch again, and rushed from the stateroom out into tine able of the sleeper. The conductor was just making his rounds and he nurried to him with a white face, just before he had impatiently turn off the semi-disguising goates, matche and false brows.

turn off the semi-disguising goates, mustche and false brows.

"Is there a doctor on board, or have you any restoratives? There is a lady"— He hesitated and the color rolled freshly into his anxious face. That is—my wife."

It was just as Gordon turned back that the thickset man entered the car from the other end and met him face to face, but Gordon was too distinguished to the third face to face, but Gordon was too distinguished to the face of the car from the other end and met him face to face, but Gordon was too distinguished to the face of the car from the other end and met him face to face, but Gordon was too distinguished to the face of the car from the

Not so with the pursuer, however. His keen little eyes took in the white, anxious face, the smear of sticking plaster about the mouth and eyeprows, and instantly knew his man, its instincts had not failed him after

oom, and the

from his appeal to the conductor and stood looking helplessly down at the delicate girl as she lay there so white and seemingly lifeless.

The conductor hurried in presently, followed by a grave elderly man with a professional air. He touched a practised finger to the limp wrist, looked closely into the face, and then, taking a little bottle from a case he carried, called for a glass.

The liquid was poured between the closed lips, the white throat reluctantly swallowed it, the cyclids presently well as the state of the closed lips.

y swallowed it, the eyelids presently fluttered, a long breat' that was scarcely more than a sigh hovered between the lips, and then the blue eyes

the looked about, bewildered, looking longest at Gordon, then closed her eyes wearly, as if she wished they had not brought her back, and lay The physician administered another

The physician administered another diaught, and ardered the porter to make up the berth immediately. Then with skilful hands and strong arms he laid the young girl in upon the pillows and made her comfortable. Gordon meanwhile standing awkwardly by with averted eyes and youbled mien. He would have liked to help, but he did not know how.

The kindly physician, the assiduous porter, and the brusque but good-hearted conductor went away at last, and Gordon was left with his precious charge, who to all appearances was sleeping quietly.

He locked the door, so that no one should disturb the sleeper, and went slowly into the little private dressing room. For a full minute after he reached it he stood looking into the mirror before him, looking at his own weary, soiled face, and wondering if he, Cyril Gordon, heretofore honored and self-respecting, had really done in the last twelve hours all the things which he was crediting himself with naving done!

After a minute he reilied, to realize

After a minute he railled, to realize that his face was dirty. He washed the marks of the adhesive plaster away, and then, not satisfied with the result, he brought his shaving things can his suit case and shaved. Somew he felt more like himself after his tollet was completed, and he loped back into the darkened drawthe couch, which, according to

merely furnished with pillows and blanket.
The night settled into the noisy quiet of an express train, and each revolution of the wheels, as they whirled their way Chicagoward, resolved itself into the old refrain, "Don't let anything hinder you!"
He certainly was not taking the most direct route from New York to Washington, though it might eventually prove that the longest way round was the shortest way home, on ac-

ally prove that the longest way round was the shortest way home, on account of its comparative safety.

The duped Holman combination would stop at nothing when they discovered his theft of the paper. As for the frantic bridegroom, Gordon dreaded the thought of meeting him. It must be put off at any hazard until the message was safe with his chief; then, if he had to answer with his life for carrying off another man's bride, he could at least feel that he left no duty to his government undons.

ment undone.

At last he yielded to the drowsiness that was stealing over him—just for a moment, he thought, and the wheels hummed on their monotonous song:

"Don't let anything hinder! Don't let anything—! Don't let—!

Don't! Hin-der-r-r-r!"

CHAPTER VIII.

HE man slept, and the train rushed on. The night waned.

The sleeping girl behind the thick green curtains He had walked close enough to the stirred and became conscious, as in bridegroom in the station to be al- many days past, of her heavy burden most sure that mustache and those of sorrow. Always at first waking the realization of it sat upon her as though it would crush the life from her body.

What had happened? Where was full of fashionable people would so everybody? Cautiously she lifted her dare to firt with chance as to ac- head and, drawing back a corner of

Gordon lay quietly on the couch, one hand under his cheek against the pillow, the other across his breast as if to guard comething. He was in the still sleep of the overwearied. He scarcely semed to be breathing. Cella dropped the curtain and put her hand to her throat. It startled her to find him so near and so still.

The long strain of weariness, and the monotony of the onrushing train. luiled her half into unconsciousness again, and theman on the couch slumbered on. He came to himself suddenly, with all his senses on the alert, as the thumping noise and motion of the train ceased, and a sudden silence

the train ceased, and a sudden silence of open country succeeded, broken now and again by distant oncoming and receding voices. He caught the fragment of a sentence from some train official:

"It's a half-hour late, and maybe more. We'll just have to lie, that's all. Here, you, Jim, take this flag and run up to the switch"—

The voice trailed into the distance, ended by the metallic note of a hammer doing something mysterious to the underpinning of the car.

Gordon sat up suddenly, his hand yet across his breast, where his first

Gordon sat up suddenly, his hand yet across his breast, where his first waking thought had been to feel if the little pencil-case were safe.

Glancing stealthily toward the curtains of the berth, and perceiving no motion, he concluded that the girl still slept.

Softly he slipped his feet into his shoes, gave one or two other touches to his toilet, and stood up, looking toward the curtains. He wanted to go out and see where they were stop-

brows, and instantly knew his instantive to the condition of the single him after all.

He put out a pair of brawny fists to catch at him, but a lurch of the train and Gordon's swift stride outpurposed him, and by the time the little man had righted his footing in the curtains. He wanted to goo ut and see where they were stopping, but dared he go without knowing that she was all right?

Softly, reverently, he stooped and brought his face close to the opening in the curtains. Cella felt his eyes upon her. Her own were closed, and by a superhuman effort she conditions and the conductor with d her breathing, slowly, gently

stateroom, and the conductor with another man was in the aisle behind him waiting to pass.

Gordon meanwhile had hurried back from his appeal to the conductor and stood looking helplessly down at the delicate girl as she lay there so white and seemingly lifeless.

The conductor hurried in presently.

The conductor hurried in presently.

The conductor hurried in presently.

The other occupants of the car

The other occupants of the car were still wrapped in slumber. Loud snores of various kinds and qualities testified to that. Gordon closed the door of the com-

partment noiselessly and went down
the aisle to the end of the car.

A door was open, and he could hear
voices outside. The conductor stood
talking with two brakemen. He heard the words: "Three-quarters of an hour at least." and then the men walked off toward the engine. Gordon looked across the country, and for the first time since he started

on his journey let himself remember that it was springtime.

And here was the chance he craved to slip away from the train before it

estling village. How easy it would be to slide down that embankment, and walk out that road over the bridge to the village, where of course a conveyance of some sort could be hired to bear him to another railroad town and thence to another railroad town and thence to—Pittsburgh, perhaps, where he could easily get a train to Washington. How easy if only he were not held by some invisible hands to care for the sweet sleeper inside the car! And yet, for her sake as well as his own, he must do something, and that right aspendily.

right speedily.

She had sprung from her berth the instant he closed the door upon her, and fastened the little catch to bar him out. She had dashed cold water into her face, fastened her garments hurriedly, and tossed the glory of her hair into place with a few touches and what hairpins she could find on the floor. Then putting on

IN THE EVENING WORLD



ber hat, coat and gloves, she had followed him into the outer air. She had a feeling that she must have air to breathe or she would suffocate.

Then he turned, and a smile of delight and welcome lit up his face. In spite of herself, she could not keep an answering smile from glimmering faintly in her own.

an answering smile from glimmering faintly in her own.

"What! You up and out here?" he said, hastening closer to the step. "How are you feeling this morning? Better, I'm sure, or you would not be here so early."

"Oh, I had to get out to the air," she said. "I couldn't stand the car another minute. I wish we could walk the rest of the way."

"Do you?" he said, with a quick, surprised appreciation in his voice. "I was just wishing something like that myself. Do you see that beautiful straight road down there? I was longing to slide down this bank and walk over to that little village for breakfast. Then we could get an auto, perhaps, or a carriage, to take us on to another train. If you hadn't been so ill last night, I might have proposed it."

proposed it."
"Could we?" she asked, earnestly.
"I should like it so much;" and there
was eagerness in her voice. "What a lovely morning! Her eves were wistful, like the eyes of those who weep and wonder why they may not laugh, since sunshine is

"Of course we could," he said, ""? "Of course we could," he said, ""f
you were only able."
"Oh, I'm able enough. I should
much rather do that than go back into
that stuffy car. But wouldn't they
think it awfuly queer of us to run
away from a train this way?"
"They needn't know anything about
it," he declared, like a boy playing
truant. "I'll slip back in the car and
get our suit-cases. Is there anything
of yours I might be in danger of leaving behind?"
"No, I put everything in my suitcase before I came out," she said list-

case before I came out. She said listlessly, as though she had already lost
her desire to go.

"I'm afraid you are not able," he
said, pausing solicitously as he scaled
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to slip away from the train before it reached a place where he could be discovered. If he had but thought to bring his suit-case! He could slip back now without being noticed and get it! He could even go without it! But—he could not leave her that way —could he? Ought he? Perhaps he could be? Perhaps he could be could b

The train stood at the top of a high embankment of cinders, below which was a smooth country road running parallel to the railroad for some distance till it met another road at right angles to it, which stretched away between the curtains into the aisle, eyes toward to see that a man was stealing quietlesses to it, which stretched away between the curtains and his origing and his original and his origin between thrifty meadow-lands to a end door, carrying two sult-cases and an umbrella. It was his man. He was sure instantly, and his mind grew frantic with the thought. Almost he had outdone himself through

foolish sleep. He half sprang from his berth, then remembered that he was but partly dressed, and jerked back quickly to grab his clothes, stopping in the operation of putting them on to yank up his window shade with an impatient click and flatten his face against the window pane! But

before he was dressed the train start-ed. His chance seemed gone. Gordon had made his way back to the girl's side without meeting any porters or wakeful fellow-pausengers. But a distant rumbling greeted his

ears.

The waite for express was

coming. If they were to get away it must be done at once or their flight would be discovered, and perhaps even prevented. It certainly was better not to have it known where they got off. He had taken the precaution to close the stateroom door behind him and so it might be some time before their absence would be discovered. Perhaps there would be other stops before the train reached Buffalo, in which case their track would not easily be followed. He had no idea that the evil eye of his pursuer was even then upon him.

pursuer was even then upon him.

Celia was already on the ground, looking off toward the little village wistfully. Just how it was to make her lot any brighter to get out of the train and run away to a strange little village she did not quite explain to herself, but it seemed to be a relief to her pent-up feelings. She was half afraid that George might raise some new objection when he returned.

Gordon swung himself down on the cinder path, scanning the track either pursuer was even then upon him.

Gordon swung himself down on the cinder path, scanning the track either way. The conductor and brakemen were not in sight. Far in the distance a black speck was rushing down upon them. Gordon could hear the vibration of the rail of the second track, upon which he placed his foot as he helped Celia across. In a moment more the train would pass. It was important that they should be down the embankment, out of sight. Would the delicate girl not be afraid of the steep incline?

the steep incline?
She hesitated for just an instant at the top, for it was very steep. Then, looking up at him, she saw that he expected her to go down with him. She gave a little frightened gasp, set her ips, and started.

He held her as well as he could with two suitcases and an umbrella clutched in his other hand, and finally, as the grade grew steeper, he let go the baggage altogether and it slid briskly down by itself, while he devoted himself to steadying the he devoted himself to steadyly

travelling, this new style of "gravity" road, but it landed them without de-

"T'm afraid you are not able," he said, pausing solicitously as he scaled the stops.

She was surprised at his interest in her welfare.

"Why, of course I am." she said insistently. "I have often taken longer walks than that looks to be, and I shall feel much better for being out. I really feel as if I couldn't stand it any longer in there."

"Good! Then, we'll try it!"

He hurried in for the baggage and left her standing on the cinder roadbed beside the train looking off at the opening morning.

CHAPTER IX.

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They went gaily down the road they might have been surprised to see two fashionably attired young persons, with hats awry and clasped hands, laughing in a country road at 5 o'clock of a May morning. But only one was awake, and by the time the two in the road below remembered to look up and take notice, the trains had head was stuck instantly out between the curtains into the aisle, eyes to
"I was just at that instant that the thick-set man in his berth not ten feet away became broadly conscious of the unwonted stiliness of the train and the cessation of motion that had lulled him to such the curtains and his bristly shocked head was stuck instantly out between the curtains into the aisle, eyes to-

her faint the night before had been the result of a series of heavy strains

reading for six cents a week.

on a heart burdened with terrible fear. The morning and his kindness had made her forget for the time that she was supposed to be walking into a world of dread and sacrifice.

Down by the brook they paused to rest, under a wearing willow whose

them to her.

She looked at them in wonder, to think they grew out here, wild, untended. She had never seen them before, except in pots in the florist's windows. She touched them delicately with the tips of her fingers, as if they were too ethereal for earth; then fastened them in the breast of her gown.

"They exactly match your eyes!"
he exclaimed involuntarily, and then
wished he had not spoken, for she
flushed and paied under his glance,
until he feit he had been unduly bold.
Her heart had thrilled strangely as Her heart had thrilled strangely as he spoke, and she was vexed with herself that it should be so. A man who had builled and threatened her for three terrible months and forced her to marry him had no right to a thrill of her heart nor a look from her eyes, be he ever so kind for the moment.

"Are you offended at what I said?" he asked earneetly. "I am sorry if you did not like it. The words said themselves without my stopping to theke whether you mark not like it. themselves without my stopping to think whether you might not like it. Will you forgive me?"

"Oughtn't we to hurry on to catch our train?" said Cella, suddenly springing to her feet. "I'm quite rest-ed now." She felt if she stayed there

ed now." She felt if she stayed there another moment she would yield to the spell be had cast upon her.
With a dull thud of consciousness the man got himself to his feet and reminded himself that this was another man's promised wife to whom he had been letting his soul go out. "Don't let anything hinder you!" Don't let anything hinder you!" suddenly babbled out the little brook, and he gathered up his suit cases and started on.

"I am going to carry my suit case, declared a very decided voice behind him, and a small hand seized hold of its handle.
"I beg your pardon, you are not!"
declared Gordon in a much more de-

termined voice.
"But they are too heavy for youboth of them—and the umbrella too,"
she protested. "Give me the umbrella then."
But he would not give her even the

But he would not give her even the umbrella, rejoicing in his strength to shield her and bear her burdens. As she walked beeide him, she remembered vividly a morning when George Hayne had made her carry two heavy baskets, that his hands might be free to shoot birds. Could this be the same George Hayne?

One long, straight, maple-lined

One long, straight, maple-lined street, running parallel to the stream, comprised the village.
"Hed a runaway?" asked one of a group of loungers.
"Oh, no!" laughed Gordon pleas- baked trout, stewed tomatoes, cold antly. "We didn't travel with slaw, custard, apple and mince ples,

horses."

"Hed a puncture, then," announced the viliage wiseacre, shifting from one foot to the other.

"Wal, you come the wrong direction to git help," said another languid listener. "Thur ain't no garridge here. The feller what uset to keep it skipped out with Sam Galt's wife a month ago. You'd ought to 'a' turned back to Ashville. They got a good black-smith there can tinker ye up."

"Is that so?" said Gordon interestedly. "Well now that's too bad, but perhaps as it can't be helped we'll have to forget it. What's the next town on shead and how far?"

"Sugar Grove's two mile further on.

town on ahead and how far?"
"Sugar Grove's two mile further on,
and Milton's five. They've got a garridge and : rest'rant to Milton, but
that's only sence the railroad built a junction there." "Has any one here a conveyance I could hire to take us to Milton?" ques-

could hire to take us to Milton?" questioned Gordon, looking anxiously about the indolent group.

"I wouldn't want to drive to Milton for less'n five dollars," declared a 'azy youth after a suitable pause.

"Very well," said Gordon, "How soon can you be ready, and what sort of a rig have you? Will it be comfortable for the lady?"

The youth eyed the graceful woman in her dainty city dress scornfully. His own country lass was dressed far prettier to his mind; but the eyes of her, so blue, like the little weed-flowers at her breast, went to his head. His tongue was suddenly tied.

to his head. His tongue was suddenly tied.

"It's all right! It's as good's you'll get!" volunteered a sullen-faced man half sitting on a sugar barrel. He was of a type who preferred to see fashionable ladies uncomfortable.

The youth departed for his "team" and after some inquiries Gordon found that he might be able to persuade the owner of the tiny white colonial cot across the street to prepare a "snack" for himself and his companion, so they went across the street and waited fifteen minutes in a dark little hair-cloth parlor adorned in funeral wreaths and knit tidies, for a delicious breakfast of poached eggs, coffee, breakfast of poached eggs, coffee, home-made bread, butter like roses, and a comb of amber honey. To each the experience was a new one, and

dren, letting their eyes speak volumes of comments in the midst of the old lady's volubility. Unconsciously by their experiences they were being

Down by the brook they paused to rest, under a weeping willow, whose green-tinged plumes were dabbling in the brook. Gordon arranged the suit-cases for her to sit upon, then climbed down to the brookside and gathered a great bunch of forget-menots, blue as her eyes, and brought them to her.

She looked at them in wonder, to think they grew out here, wild, untended. She had never seen them better the backless seat, that she might feel more secure.

the backless seat, that she might feel more secure.

That ride, with his arm behind her, was just one more link in the pretty chain of sympathy that was being welded about these two. Thus like children on a picnic, they passed through Sugar Grove and came to the town of Milton, and there they bade their driver good-by, rewarding him with a five-dollar bill. He drove home with a vision of smiles in forget-me-not eyes, and a marked inability to tell anything about his wonderful passengers who had filled the little village with awe and amassement, and had given no cine to any one as to who or what they were.

B UT to go back to the pursuer, in his berth, baffied frantic and hands that fumbled because of their very eagerness, he sought to get into his garments and kets and other articles in the berth, all the time keeping one eye out of the quickly to stifle it. window, for he must not let his prev get away from him now.

When the train stopped for a moment at a water tank a few miles hewond he got off and hastily made his way back to the spot where Gordon and Cella had debarked. In due time

way back to the spot where Gordon and Ceila had debarked. In due time could?"

"Letters!" he repeated stupidly, and then added with perplexed tone: "What else could I think? It bears the hired a rig and late in the day got to Milton.

All this time Ceila and Gordon were touring Milton, serenely unconscious of danger near.

Investigation disclosed the fact that there was a train for Pittsburgh about three in the afternoon. Gordon sent a code telegram to his chief, assuring him of the safety of the message, and of his own intention to proceed to Washington as fast as steam could carry him. Then took the girl to a restaurant, where they mounted two high stools, band trook with an unusually ravenous appetite of nearly everything on the menu—corn soup, roast beef, baked trout, stewed tomatoes, cold siaw, custard, apple and mince ples, with a cup of good country coffee and real cream—all for twenty-five cents aplece.

It was a very merry meal. Ceila in memory of the past had been taken from her, and she were free to think and act happily in the present, with an unusualle to complete the property of the past had been taken from her, and she were free to think and act happily in the present, with an unusualle to think and act happily in the present, with a cup of good country coffee had been taken from her, and she were free to think and act happily in the present, with an unusualle to think it was in the letters that hurt what it was in the letters that hurt what it was in the letters that hurt was in the letters

and act happily in the present, without any great problems to solve or decisions to make. Just two young people off having a good time, they were, at least until that afternoon

train came.

After their dinner they took a short walk to a tiny park where two white their initials. Gordon took out his knife and idly cut C. H. in the rough bark of the upper rall, while his com-panion sat on the little board seat and watched him. She was ponder-

Those letters! How they haunted her and clouded every bright experience that she fain would have grasped and held for a little hour.

They were silent now, while he worked and she thought. He had finished the C. H., and was cutting another C, but instead of making another H, he carefully carved out the letter G. What was that for? C. G.? Who was C. G.? Oh, how stupid! George, of course. He had started a C by mistake. But he did not add the expected H. Instead he snapped his knife shut, laid his hand over the carving and leaned over the carving and leaned over the rail. the rail.

She moved her hand on the rail to lean further over, and her soft fingers touched his hand for a moment. She would not draw them away quickly, lest she hurt him; why, she did not know, but she could not—would not— hurt him. Not now! The two hands lay side by side for a full minute, and touch to Gordon was as if a rose-

the touch to Gordon was as if a rose-leaf had kissed his soul.

Then a sharp whistle sounded, and a farmer's boy with a new rake and a sack of corn on his shoulder came sauntering briskly down the road to the bridge. Instantly they drew apart, and Celia felt that she had been on the verge of disloyalty to her true self.

They walked silently back to the station, each busy with his own thoughts, each conscious of that one moment when the other had come so

CHAPTER XI.

HERE were a lot of people at the station. They had been to a family gathering of some sort from their remarks, and they talked loudly and much, so that the two stood apart-for the seats were all occupied-and had no opportunity for conversation, save a quiet smiling comment now and then upon the divulge either for his own benefit or

chatter about them, or the odd remarks they heard.

By the time they were seated in the train Cella was freezing in her attitude, and poor Gordon sat miserably beside her and tried to think what he had done to offend her. It was not his fault that ber hand bad lain near his on the rail. She had put it there herself. Perhaps she expected him to put his over it, to show her that he cared as a bridegroom should care -as he did care, in reality, if he only had the right. And perhaps she was burt that he had stood coolly and said or done nothing. But he could not

carried a parior car, and it happened on this particular day to be almost deserted save for a deaf old man with a florid complexion and a gold knobbed cane who slumbered audibly at the further end from the two chairs Gordon selected.

As they neared the outskirts of Pittsburgh he leaned softly forward and touched her coat sleeve to attract

"Have I offended-hurt-you in any way?" he asked gently. She turned toward him, and her eyes were brim-

find his shoes from the meles of blan- get those letters!" She ended with

believe ma, three a good motive in doing so."

She looked at him in surprise. It was impossible to be angry with those kindly eyes, even though he did persist in a wilful stupidity.

"Well, then, since you wish it stated once more, I will tell you," she declared, the tears welling again into her eyes. "You first demanded that I marry you—demanded—without any pretense whatever of caring for mewith a hidden threat in your demand that if I did not you would bring some dire calamity upon me by means that were already in your power.

"You took me for the same foolish little girl whom you had delighted to tease for years before you went abroad to live. And when I refused you you told me that you could not only take away from my mother all

and watched him. She was pondering on the fact that he had cut her
initials, and not his own. It would
have been like the George of old to
cut his own and never once think of
hers. And he had put but one H.
Probably he thought of her now as
Celia Hayne, without the Hathaway,
or else he was so used to writing
her name Celia Hathaway that he
was not thinking at all.

Those letters! How they haunted
her and clouded every bright expeyou; but that you could and would blacken my dear dead father's name and honor and show that every cent that belonged to mother and Jefferson

prove that he had spent much of his time in her company.

"You knew the whole thing was a falsehood, but you dared to threaten to make this known through the newspapers if I did not marry you. You realized that I knew that, even though few people and no friends would believe such a thing of my father, such a report in the papers—false though it was—would crush my mother to death. You knew that I would give my life to save her, and so you had me in your power, as you have me now.

though few people and no friends would believe such a thing of my father, such a report in the papers—false though it was—would crush my mother to death. You knew that I would give my life to save her, and so you had me in your power, as you have me now.

"You have always wanted me in your power, just because you love to torture, and now you have me. But you cannot make me forget what you have done. I have given my life but I cannot give any more. If it is not satisfactory you will have to do your worst."

She dropped her face into the little wet handkerchief, and Gordon sat with white, drawn countenance and clenched hands. He was fairly trembling with indignation toward the villan who had thus dared impose upon this delicate flower of womanhood. He longed to search the world over for the false bridegroom; and, finding, give him his just dues.

And what should he do or say? Dared he tell her at once who he was and trust to her kind heart to forgive his terrible blunder and keep his secret till the message was safely delivered? Dared he? Had he any right? No, the secret was not his to delivered? Dared he? Had he any right? No, the secret was not his to

for any other's. He must keep that to himself. But he must help her in

come way.

"I sever wrote those letters," he said, looking her steadily, earnestly. In the eyes.

"You never wrote them!" she enclaimed excitedly. "You dare to dany it?"

"I dare to deny it." His voice was quiet, carnest, convincing.

She looked at him, daned, bewildered, indignant, sorrowful. "But you cannot deny it," she said, her fragile frame trembling with excitement. "I have the letters all in my suit-case. You cannot deny your own handwriting. I have the lest awful one—the one in which you threatened Father's good name—here in my hand-bag. I dared not put it with the rest, and I had no opportunity to destroy it before leaving home. I feit as if I must always seep it with me, lest otherwise its awful secret would somehow get out. There it is. Read it and see your own name signed to the words you say you did not write!" "I dare to deny it." His voice wa

While she talked, her trembling fingers had taken a folded, crumpled letter from her little hand-bag, and this she reached over and laid upon the arm of his chair.

"Read it," rhe said. "Read it and see that you cannot deay it."
"I should rather not read it," he said. "I do not need to read it t. deny that I ever wrote such things to you.
"But I insist that you read it," said the girl.

ming full of tears.

"No," she said, and her lips were trembling. "No, you have been most—kind—but—but I cannot forget those letters!" She ended with a sob and put up her handkerchief quickly to stiffe it.

"Letters?" he asked helplessly. "What letters?"

"The letters you wrote me. All the letters of the last five months. I cannot forget them. I can never forget them.

"But I insist that you road it," he said, taking the letter reluctantly and opening it.

She sat watching him furtively through the tears while he read, eaw the augre fusion of a fallow man was revealed to him through the brief, coarse, cruel epistle, and she mistered the flush for one of shame.

Then his true you road it," he said, taking the letter reluctantly and opening it.

She sat watching him furtively through the tears while he read, eaw the villainy of a fallow man was revealed to him through the tears while he read, eaw the villainy of a fallow man was revealed to him through the tears while he read, eaw the augre plants of the villainy of a fallow man was revealed to him through the tears while he read, eaw the villainy of a fallow man was revealed to him through the tears while he read, eaw the augre plants of the plants of th

vanishing porter.
"Yas, sah!" yelled the porter, put-

"Yas, sah!" yelled the porter, putting his head around the curve of
the passageway. "You bettah hurry,
sah, foh dis train goes on to Ciscinnati pretty quick. We's late gittin' in, you see."

Neither of them had noticed a man
in rough clothes with a slouch hat
and hands in his pockets who had
boarded the train a few miles back
and walked through the car sevarsal
times eyeing them keenly. He stuck
his head in at the door now furtively
and drew back quickly again out of
sight.

sight.

Gordon hurriedly gathered up the basgage and they went out of the car, the porter rushing back as they reached the door, to assist them and get a last tip. There was no opportunity to say anything more, as they mingled with the crowd, until the porter landed their basgage in the great station and hurried back to his train. The man with the clouch hat followed and stood unobtrusively behind them.

hind them.
Gordon looked down at the white, drawn face of the girl and his heart was touched with compassion for

(To Be Continued.)

A SEQUEL (THOUGH AN ENTIRE STORY BY ITSELF) TO "CAPT. VELVET'S WELCOME;"-THE STRANGE EXPLOITS OF THREE NEW YORKERS IN THE TROPICS NEXT WEEK'S COMPLETE NOVEL

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